

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion:** SOUTH **County:** TULARE

**Applicant:** COMMUNITY SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

**Project Title:** TULE RIVER ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

**Reference Number:** SNC 070271

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will assist in the completion of environmental and heritage resource reviews to meet CEQA and or NEPA requirements for trail restoration, maintenance, graffiti abatement, and interpretive projects planned to be implemented along a 15 mile stretch of the Tule River near the community of Springville. This area provides wildlife habitat, municipal water, hydroelectric power, farm irrigation water, educational opportunities, and many recreational choices. Bilingual surveys will be conducted to evaluate public response for trail restoration, identify issues and concerns, and receive feedback to a proposed automated permit system. This project leverages the funds and in-kind services of the Forest Service, CSET, and the non-profit organization WildPlaces to prepare these reviews and conduct public surveys. Current donations and in-kind services total \$200,994.

These reviews will lead to projects that will:

- Protect and conserve Native American archaeological resources during graffiti removal;
- Identify potential impacts to natural resources;
- Protect and enhance wildlife habitat during trail restoration;
- Improve watershed health with erosion control.

Steps to complete this project are:

- Posting reviews on archaeologist schedules;
- Conducting environmental and heritage resource reviews;
- Notifying the public and conducting public surveys;
- Surveying cultural resources;
- Evaluating documents and including feedback;
- Finalizing heritage and environmental resource reviews;
- Completing and submitting 6 month progress report to SNC.
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This project will also complement the Forest Service's efforts to address growing management challenges of this heavily used area, specifically seeking feedback on a proposed automated permit system on land surrounding the Tule River Watershed.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Post heritage resource review on archaeologist schedule	July 2008
Post environmental review on archaeologist schedule	July, 2008
Begin heritage and environmental reviews	August 2008
Public notification/public surveys	September 2008
Complete and submit 6 month progress report to SNC	October 2008
Survey cultural resources	November 2008
Evaluation documents	January 2009
Complete heritage and environmental reviews	February 2009
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>April 2009</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Heritage resource review	\$75,000
Environmental review	50,000
Surveys, evaluations, public notifications	5,000
Administrative expenses	10,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>

**Letters of Support:**

None submitted.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends the authorization of this grant for the requested \$140,000.

## 2. Project Summary

Provide a summary (one-page maximum) that describes key elements of the project and states the total project cost.

The Tule River watershed education, conservation and restoration project is a long-term plan proposed by the United States Forest Service (USFS) in partnership with Community Services & Employment Training (CSET), the Tulare County Youth Corps (a certified local conservation corps) and WildPlaces. These partners have collaborated to bring to bear their distinct expertise and resources to restore and protect the Tule River. The USFS will provide trail restoration job opportunities to CSET's Tulare County Youth Corps such as brush removal, tread maintenance, erosion control and graffiti removal. WildPlaces and CSET will provide educational opportunities and gang prevention strategies through media campaigns, interpretive signs, publications, events and outdoor education camps. The USFS is investigating and developing an automated cash system to support a permit system on adjacent surrounding lands within the Tule River watershed.

**This Tule River Environmental Review Project** proposal (Phase 2) is the catalyst for the Tule River watershed education, conservation and restoration project. (*Phase 1 is the Tule River Site Improvement Project proposed in the SNC competitive grant*). An environmental and heritage resource review is a required component prior to trail restoration, maintenance, graffiti abatement and the placement of interpretive signs. The United States Forest Service will hire an archaeologist to conduct a Heritage Resource Review, which will identify potential impacts to natural heritage resources (rare animals, rare plants, exemplary natural communities and significant geologic features). In addition, an environmental review to include wildlife and plant surveys will be conducted to ensure that the proposed work will not negatively impact the existing habitat.

The **Tule River Environmental Review Project** will culminate with improved health to the Tule River through the innovative solutions proposed by the partnership. These solutions include the restoration of 10 miles (30E29) of the popular Tule River Trail, which includes removal of brush, graffiti, and invasive species as well as placement of interpretive signs. Additionally, CSET will conduct bilingual surveys to evaluate general public response for trail restoration; identify issues, concerns and receive feedback to the proposed permit system solution; and create a template for electronic public notification.

### Budget Summary

Anticipated Funding Committed	\$ 83,319
In-Kind Services Committed	\$117,675
<b>SNC Grant Request</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$340,994</b>